Payment of baggage duty for N.R.Is. in foreign exchange

1285. SH. JOHN F. FERNANDES: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a rule for the customs to exempt personal baggage duty of N.R.Is in Foreign Exchange;

(b) if so, whether this rule has been adhered to; and

(c) if not, whether Government would see that it is made a rule and strictly followed, in order to avoid pilferage of Foreign Exchange?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply to part (a) above.

(c) The suggestion has been noted for examination.

Minimum export price to be fixed in dollars

1286. SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representation from Chambers of Commerce from various parts of the country to have Minimum Export Price fixed up in view of devaluation of Indian rupee; and

(b) if so, what is Government's response to this request?

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Percentage of literacy in the country

1287. SHRI PASUMPON THA. KIRUTTINAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the percentage of literacy in the country for the year 1991 and what was the figure for the years 1981;

(b) what are the relevant figures for Tamil Nadu; and

(c) what measures are being taken to improve the literacy percentage in the country with particular reference to Tamil Nadu?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) The percentage of literacy in the country according to the 1981 (excluding Assam) and 1991 (excluding J & K) census for the population aged 7 years and above was 43.56 per cent and 52.11 per cent respectively.

(b) The percentage of literacy in Tamil Nadu according to the 1981 and 1991 census for the population aged 7 years and above was 54.38 per cent and 633.72 per cent respectively.

(c) Universalisation of elementary education and universal retention in schools of children upto 14 years of age, a programme of non-formal education in the ten educationally backward States and the National Literacy Mission which aims at imparting functional literacy to 80 million adult illiterates in the 15—35 age-group by 1995 form an integral part of a larger programme for eradication of illiteracy for the country as a whole.

385 blocks have been covered in the State of Tamil Nadu under the scheme of "Operation Blackboard" 775 Centres are functioning in the State under Non-Formal Education Programme. Under the National Literacy Mission total literacy campaigns have been launched in Kamarajar, Pasumpon Thevar Thirumagan and Pudukottai District in addition to the other ongoing adult education programme.

Checking illegal felling of the trees

1288. SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the plans of Government to save illegal fellings of the trees all over the country; and